

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising:
5 certifying a plurality of online entities;
selectively generating corresponding media objects for each of a plurality of
online entities based on the certification, wherein each of the media objects includes
media to present a unique seal of certification for each of the entities; and
embedding security features into the media objects to prevent misuse of the
10 media objects.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the media objects comprise images, and
embedding security features into the media objects includes embedding digital
watermarks into the images.
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3. The method of claim 1, wherein embedding security features into the media
objects includes embedding expiration dates for the seals into the objects.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein embedding expiration dates includes encrypting
20 the expiration dates.
5. The method of claim 3, further comprising:
accessing a network of computing resources to identify occurrences of the media
objects, wherein the media objects are presented as portions of websites;
25 reading the expiration dates embedded within the media objects to determine
whether the media objects remain valid; and
revoking each media object that is determined not to remain valid.
6. The method of claim 5, wherein revoking the media objects includes replacing a
30 media object located on a remote server with a second media object.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the second media object contains an image visually different from an image contained within the replaced media object.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein embedding security features into the media
5 objects includes embedding dates into the objects.

9. A computer-readable medium comprising instructions that cause a programmable processor to:

generate corresponding media objects for each of a plurality of online entities,
10 wherein each of the media objects includes media to present a unique seal of certification for each of the entities; and

embed security features into the media objects to prevent misuse of the media objects.

15 10. The computer-readable medium of claim 9, wherein the media objects comprise images, and

wherein the instructions that cause a programmable processor to embed security features into the media objects comprise instructions that cause a programmable processor to embed digital watermarks into the images.

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11. The computer-readable medium of claim 9, wherein the instructions that cause a programmable processor to embed security features into the media objects comprise instructions that cause a programmable processor to embed expiration dates for the seals into the objects.

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12. The computer-readable medium of claim 11, wherein the instructions that cause a programmable processor to embed expiration dates comprise instructions that cause a programmable processor to encrypt the expiration dates.

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13. The computer-readable medium of claim 11, further comprising instructions that cause a programmable processor to:

access a network of computing resources to identify occurrences of the media objects, wherein the media objects are presented as portions of websites;

5 read the expiration dates embedded within the media objects to determine whether the media objects remain valid; and

revoke each media object that is determined not to remain valid.

14. The computer-readable medium of claim 13, wherein the instructions that cause
10 a programmable processor to revoke the media objects comprise instructions that cause a programmable processor to replace a media object located on a remote server with a second media object.

15. The computer-readable medium of claim 14, wherein the second media object
15 contains an image visually different from an image contained within the replaced media object.

16. A method comprising:

generating corresponding media objects for each of a plurality of online entities,
20 wherein each of the media objects includes media to present a unique seal of certification for each of the entities;

receiving requests from web browsers executing on client devices for the media objects;

communicating the requested media objects to the requesting web browsers for
25 presentment of the respective seals of certification to users as portions of websites; and maintaining a log of the requests to detect misuse of the media objects.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein maintaining a log of the requests comprises storing a unique identifier for each client device within the request log.

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18. The method of claim 17, wherein the unique identifier include an Internet Protocol address.
19. The method of claim 17, further comprising:
5 analyzing the request log to detect misuse of the media objects; and
alerting the entities associated with misused media objects of the detected misuse.
20. The method of claim 19, wherein analyzing the request log to detect misuse
10 comprises analyzing the request log to detect an unexpected unique identifier.
21. The method of claim 19, further comprising:
removing the misused media objects from a server; and
generating a new media objects for the associated entities.
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22. A system comprising:
a server to generate corresponding media objects for each of a plurality of online
entities, wherein each of the media objects includes media to present a unique seal of
certification for each of the entities, receive requests from web browsers executing on
20 client devices for the media objects, and communicate the requested media objects to
the requesting web browsers for presentment of the respective seals of certification to
users as portions of websites; and
a database to store a log of the requests, wherein the server maintains the request
log to detect misuse of the media objects.
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23. The system of claim 22, wherein the server stores a unique identifier for each
client device within the request log.
24. The system of claim 23, wherein the unique identifier include an Internet
30 Protocol address.

25. The system of claim 23, wherein the server analyzes the request log to detect misuse of the media objects, and alerts the entities associated with misused media objects of the detected misuse.
- 5 26. The system of claim 35, wherein the server analyzes the request log to detect unexpected unique identifiers.
27. The system of claim 25, wherein the server deletes the misused media objects from a database, and generates new media objects for the associated entities.
- 10 28. A method comprising:
storing information for each of a plurality of online entities within a database;
generating corresponding media objects for each the online entities, wherein each of the media objects includes media to present a unique seal for each of the
15 entities;
communicating a requested one of the media objects to a web browser for presentment of the respective seal to a user as a portion of a website; and
selectively providing the information stored within the database for the entity associated with requested media object to the user via the web browser.
- 20 29. The method of claim 28, wherein selectively providing the data comprises:
after communicating the requested media object to the client device, receiving a request from the client device to view additional information for the entity corresponding to the requested media object;
25 retrieving the information as a function of a unique identifier provided by the request; and
communicating the information to the client device for display to the user.
30. The method of claim 28, wherein the entity comprises an online merchant and
30 the information includes a transaction history for the merchant.

31. The method of claim 28, further comprising storing a disclosure setting for each entity, and wherein selectively providing the information includes filtering the information based on the disclosure setting.
- 5 32. The method of claim 31, further comprising filtering the information based on a universal resource locator (URL) received during the request for the information.
33. The method of claim 28, wherein selectively presenting the information comprises providing a web page that includes the information.
- 10 34. A computer-readable medium comprising instructions that cause a programmable processor to:
- store information for each of a plurality of online entities within a database;
 - generate corresponding media objects for each the online entities, wherein each
 - 15 of the media objects includes media to present a unique seal for each of the entities;
 - communicate a requested one of the media objects to a web browser for presentment of the respective seal to a user as a portion of a website; and
 - selectively provide the information stored within the database for the entity associated with requested media object to the user via the web browser.
- 20 35. The computer-readable medium of claim 34, wherein the instructions that cause a programmable processor to selectively providing the data comprise instructions that cause a programmable processor to:
- after communicating the requested media object to the client device, receive a
 - 25 request from the client device to view additional information for the entity corresponding to the requested media object;
 - retrieve the information as a function of a unique identifier provided by the request; and
 - communicate the information to the client device for display to the user.
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36. The computer-readable medium of claim 34, wherein the entity comprises an online merchant and the information includes a transaction history for the merchant.

37. The computer-readable medium of claim 34, further comprising instructions that
5 cause a programmable processor to store a disclosure setting for each entity, and
wherein the instructions that cause a programmable processor to selectively
provide the information comprise instructions that cause a processor to filter the
information based on the disclosure setting.

10 38. The computer-readable medium of claim 37, further comprising instructions that
cause a programmable processor to filter the information based on a universal resource
locator (URL) received during the request for the information.

39. The computer-readable medium of claim 34, wherein the instructions that cause
15 a programmable processor to selectively present the information comprise instructions
that cause a programmable processor to provide a web page that includes the
information.

40. A system comprising:
20 a database to store information for each of a plurality of online entities; and
a server to generate corresponding media objects for each the online entities,
wherein each of the media objects includes media to present a unique seal for each of
the entities, communicate a requested one of the media objects to a web browser for
presentment of the respective seal to a user as a portion of a website, and selectively
25 provide the information stored within the database for the entity associated with
requested media object to the user via the web browser.

41. The system of claim 40, wherein after communicating the requested media object to the client device, the server receives a request from the client device to view additional information for the entity corresponding to the requested media object, retrieves the information as a function of a unique identifier provided by the request,
5 and communicates the information to the client device for display to the user.

42. The system of claim 40, wherein the entity comprises an online merchant and the information includes a transaction history for the merchant.

10 43. The system of claim 40, where the server stores a disclosure setting for each entity, and filters the information based on the disclosure setting.

44. The system of claim 43, wherein the server filters the information based on a universal resource locator (URL) received during the request for the information.

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45. The system of claim 40, wherein the server provides a web page that includes the information to the user.

46. A method for preventing misuse of electronic seals associated with participants in an electronic marketplace that is accessed via a computer network and enables participants to buy and sell items comprising, the method comprising:

- generating corresponding media objects for each of a plurality of participants in the marketplace, wherein each of the media objects includes media to present a unique seal of certification for each of the participants as an image;
- embedding digital watermarks into the images and dates into the media objects;
- accessing a network of computing resources to identify occurrences of the media objects, wherein the media objects are presented as portions of websites associated with the online marketplace;
- reading the dates embedded within the media objects to determine whether the media objects are valid; and
- revoking each media object that is determined not to be valid.

47. The method of claim 46, further comprising certifying the participants, wherein generating corresponding media objects comprises generating corresponding media objects for each of the participants based on the certification.

48. The method of claim 47, wherein certifying participants comprises at least one of verifying that a business practice of the participants meets a standard and receiving agreements to participate in online dispute resolution from the entities.

49. The method of claim 46, wherein the participants are sellers in the online marketplace.

50. A method for preventing misuse of electronic seals associated with participants in an electronic marketplace that is accessed via a computer network and enables participants to buy and sell items comprising, the method comprising:
- generating corresponding media objects for each of a plurality of participants in the online marketplace, wherein each of the media objects includes media to present a unique seal of certification for each of the participants as an image;
 - embedding dates in within the media objects;
 - receiving requests from web browsers executing on client devices for the media objects;
 - communicating the requested media objects to the requesting web browsers for presentment of the respective seal of certification to users as portions of websites associated with the online marketplace;
 - maintaining a log of the requests that includes an Internet Protocol address associated with each requesting client device;
 - analyzing the request log to detect misuse of the media objects;
 - alerting the participants associated with misused media objects of the detected misuse;
 - removing the misused media objects from a server; and
 - generating new media objects for the associated entities.
51. The method of claim 50, further comprising certifying the participants, wherein generating corresponding media objects comprises generating corresponding media objects for each of the participants based on the certification.
52. The method of claim 51, wherein certifying participants comprises at least one of verifying that a business practice of the participants meets a standard, that a participant agrees to the standard, and receiving agreements to participate in online dispute resolution from the participants.
53. The method of claim 50, wherein the participants are sellers in an online marketplace.

54. A method for selectively providing information associated with participants in an online marketplace that is accessed via a computer network and enables participants to buy and sell items to other participants in the online marketplace, the method

5 comprising:

storing information and a disclosure setting for each of a plurality of participants in the online marketplace within a database;

generating corresponding media objects for each of the participants, wherein each of the media objects includes media to present a unique seal for each of the
10 participants that is determined based on the information stored in the database for each of the participants;

communicating a requested one of the media objects to a web browser for presentment of the respective seal to a user as a portion of a website associated with the online marketplace;

15 after communicating the requested media object to the client device, receiving a request from the client device to view additional information for the participant corresponding to the requested media object;

retrieving the information stored in the database for the participant associated with the requested media object as a function of a unique identifier provided by the
20 request;

filtering the information based on the disclosure setting stored in the database for the participant associated with the requested media object; and

communicating the filtered information to the client device for display to the user.